

West Africa SCGP Success Stories

By Bruce Zanin

In Côte d'Ivoire since the late 1980s, U.S. brown rice has been the core of food aid shipments under P.L. 480 Title I and Food for Progress. But it was not until August 2000 that the first commercial sale of 6,000 metric tons of U.S. brown rice was made, using the Supplier Credit Guarantee Program (SCGP).

Through September 2001, **Uniriz**, the largest Ivorian miller, had made four purchases, worth approximately \$6 million, all using short-term financing facilitated by the SCGP. The brown rice is milled and sold under the Oncle Jo brand, which is steadily gaining a larger share of Côte d'Ivoire's market for high-quality rice.

The Rice Company of Roseville, Calif. has made sales of brown rice and corn in this market through the SCGP. In the spring of 2002, the company shipped 6,000 metric tons of rice and 3,000 tons of corn. The Rice Company and Uniriz were brought



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together through an FAS trade mission in February 2000, in which the USA Rice Federation, a cooperator in USDA's Foreign Market Development Program, participated.

In Mauritania

Staff from the U.S. Department of Commerce's Foreign Commercial Service (FCS), the FAS Office of Agricultural Affairs in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, the U.S. Embassy in Nouakchott, Mauritania, and a U.S. exporter combined efforts to use the SCGP in Mauritania.

Lighthouse American International, Inc., the U.S. exporter, has registered its first sale under the SCGP for \$2.3

million in wheat and expects to conclude another sale of \$2.3 million worth of vegetable oil soon.

The effort began in June 2000, when the U.S. Embassy in Nouakchott sent in a private trade opportunity cable for a Mauritanian importer of a number of food products. Lighthouse American International began negotiations with the Mauritanian company. The deal hinged on the extension of short-term credit to the importer.

Initially, Mauritania was not included in the SCGP allocations for the West Africa region. However, at the request of Lighthouse American, the country was added in August 2001. ■

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